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Also, by the same Author,

ON NERVOUS DISEASES,

**Arising from LIVER and STOMACH COMPLAINTS, LOW
SPIRITS, INDIGESTION, GOUT, and DISORDERS produced by
TROPICAL CLIMATES; with CASES.—Sixth Edition.**

ON
SOME OF THE MOST
IMPORTANT
DISORDERS OF WOMEN.



BY
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&c. &c. &c.

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P R E F A C E.

WHETHER we consider Woman physically or morally, she is alike entitled to the care, the affection, and the admiration of Man: many able writers have done great justice to this theme, and in glowing terms have extolled her influence over society: but reviewing her natural infirmities—from her first merging into womanhood, the pains and penalties inflicted upon her, the danger and modest solicitude peculiar to her sex alone,—Woman justly claims the fostering and unremitting attention of all men, but more especially those of the medical profession, who, in the discharge of their duties,

have so many opportunities of administering to their relief.

“ Women are not in their best fortunes strong.”

The following remarks result from an earnest desire to remedy some of those maladies of the female sex which civilization has tended much to aggravate in their constitutions.

Health is the main spring of intellectual as well as bodily enjoyment, and the greatest blessing bestowed in common by a munificent Creator: yet how wantonly is it sported with, tampered, and abused; and how often does the physician behold mortals suffering for want of that which has been so recklessly sacrificed! Nature pleads and punishes in vain: and thus, from the lowest to the highest grade in the scale of humanity, similar indiscretions are evinced, similar excesses are committed, and a like disregard for the preservation of health is manifested:

“ Oh! blessed health, thou art above all gold and treasure. He that has thee, has little more to wish for; and he that is so wretched as to want thee, wants everything with thee.”

My attention having been for several years particularly directed to the various and complicated forms of "indigestion," (which pass under the vague denomination of bilious, nervous, and stomach complaints), many of the important diseases of women have occurred in my practice, inasmuch as most of their symptoms appeared to be closely allied to that prevalent malady.

In the following pages I have attempted to investigate the nature of several uterine diseases, and I have endeavoured to point out the distinction between their causes and effects, on the discrimination of which must the successful treatment of these diseases depend.

In enumerating the symptoms of various disorders, I have been led to introduce some observations on Diet, Exercise, and Clothing; and have endeavoured to pourtray some of the injurious consequences resulting from their indiscriminate and improper employment.

In my progress I have availed myself of valuable authorities, and I have been desirous to profit by their opinions, as my peculiar object

has been to make this work a *natural, simple,*
and *effectual* mode of treating some of those
maladies which have been justly designated as
among the greatest scourges of the human
race.

Chigwell, Essex,
and
Golden-Square, London.

DISORDERS OF WOMEN.

AMIDST the variety of diseases that afflict our nature, there are none which sap the foundation of human happiness in a greater degree—there are none which excite the sympathy or elicit the earnest attention of mankind more powerfully, than those maladies which affect women. Domestic comforts, the links of the creation, the health or life of the progeny, are alike involved; and although all deviations from health ought to claim the utmost attention and the best energies of medical practitioners, yet the diseases of women must ever be considered as of paramount importance. Many valuable works have issued from the press in which the varieties of female diseases have been treated,

and exceedingly scientific and useful information has been rendered ; but these varieties have been mainly attributed to deranged organic functions : although it would ill become me to question the correctness of such opinions, yet I feel justified in communicating the result of those practical observations which have resulted from the numerous and complicated cases of indigestion that have been submitted to my treatment.

It is therefore my intention to confine these remarks to the more important disorders of women. The hysteric, chlorotic, the imperfect, and morbid uterine function, will form the subjects of this Essay.

The laws which regulate the functions of the brain, and which connect the nervous system with every part of the frame, claim the greatest consideration of every man in the profession, and ought to form the most important portion of any book professing the management of nervous disorders. It is well known that there are no classes of disease more calculated to excite our astonishment, or which tend more to puzzle

our judgments, than that assuming the form and character of hysteria*.

In the present condition of civilized society the same exciting causes affect the female sex as the male; and the former not having a life of similar activity and energy, is more exposed to those affections which induce and characterize the various and complicated forms of hysteria, by acting upon the mind or sentient principle, and its effects are more apt to appear in the increasing emotions of the nervous system.

When the exercise of the body does not correspond with the operations of the mind †, a want

* “Sed nec spectabilior est hujus morbi frequentia, quam varietas illa multiformis, qua se ostendit et nullos fere non æmulatur ex iis adfectibus, quibus atteruntur miseri mortales. Quamcumque enim corporis partem insederit, symptomata, qualia ei competunt parti statim producit. Et nisi medicus tam sagaci quadam sollertia quam in arte peritia valeat, fraus ei fiet, atque ista symptomata à morbo aliquo essentiali hujus vel illius partis, non vero ab adfectione hysterica, pendere arbitrabitur.”—*Sydenham*, p. 389.

† “By far the greater portion of the young ladies (for they are no longer women) of the present day are distinguished by

of harmony is induced in the different parts of the animal frame, which ought to act in concert, and in females this want particularly evinces itself by frequent spasmodic and convulsive affections. It therefore becomes important that we should have recourse to those means the necessity of which nature indicates,—the action of the muscular system by exercise.

Cases of hysteric disease occur in females at the age of puberty, and frequently at other periods of life. They are generally preceded by a fulness of the throat, and the well-known sensation as if a ball were lodged there, a feeling of suffocation, fainting, depression of spirits*,

a morbid listlessness of mind and body, except when under the influence of stimulus, a constant pining for excitements, and an eagerness to escape from anything like practical and individual duty. God's ordinances are not to be mocked, and violation of his laws are severely visited upon the offenders against them."—*Mrs. Ellis's excellent Work on the Women of England.*

* The learned Sydenham remarks, "De Adfectione Hysterica," p. 367, "Addo quod hystericæ fere omnes quotquot ego hactenus tractavi de spirituum dejectione sine subsidientia (ut cum illis loquor), conqueruntur pulmonis rigionem indigi-

crying, fits of laughter, and screaming. I have frequently witnessed these paroxysms taking place on any sudden emotion of the mind, previous to the period of menstruation. The patient complains of pain in the head and in the balls of the eyes, indistinct vision; the skin is dry and horny, the countenance anxious, and the pulse frequent and intermitting; delirium sometimes ensues. Violent struggles take place, requiring great care to protect the patient from injury; and at length she awakes without the slightest recollection of anything that has occurred. She now complains of tenderness of the head, the light is offensive, great flatulence and eructation of wind, and the usual prostration of strength after violent mental or nervous exertions, is fully evidenced*.

tantes quoties locum in quo hæc spirituum contractio seu subsidentia sententur volunt designare."

▪ "Convulsive struggling, alternately remitting and exacerbating, rumbling in the bowels, sense of suffocation, drowsiness, urine copious and limpid, temper fickle. There is no frame that may not become a prey to the species of spasmodic action we are now describing, and that the most violent instances of hysteric struggle that occur to us are in young

These may be considered as the prominent and usual symptoms of hysteria; and although they present so formidable an appearance, they are seldom, if ever, productive of any fatal result.

The predisposing causes of hysteria are the fashionable and luxurious modes of life, the sudden obstruction to any of the uterine functions, habitual state of costiveness, and the sedentary or inactive existence to which many females submit; likewise hot air, rendered so by fires or stoves in small rooms. A modern author states, "In the cure of hysteria, two indications are to be attended to:

"The first is to allay the spasmodic symptoms which constitute the fit.

"The second, to lessen the excitability of the nervous system, and strengthen the whole frame, during the intermissions of the paroxysms."

In both these points I cordially agree, although differing most materially in the mode of attain-

women of the most robust and masculine constitution."—
Good's Study of Medicine, vol. iii. p. 531.

ing them. In allaying the paroxysm I should seldom have recourse to bleeding, nor should I at once adopt any means to strengthen the frame ; but, viewing the remote *cause* of the disease, I should direct my measures to its removal. Considering as I do, in these cases, that the nervous system is unnaturally excited by an inordinate circulation of blood to the brain ; that the stomach and liver, with other important functions, are all loaded and impeded in their duties ; my principal object would be, therefore, to harmonize the system ; this would mainly be effected by acting on the great safety-valve of the animal frame, the liver ; and also by promoting the perfect evacuation of the alimentary canal.

There is nothing more certain than that we feel ourselves either vigorous and healthful, or feeble and sickly, as the functions of the stomach are in a sound or an infirm state. We know that a depraved condition of the stomach frequently produces an unnatural desire for food, or the greatest aversion to it ; and we often wit-

ness that melancholy and low spirits are the results of this morbid derangement ; the circulation becomes languid, the vigour and energy of the whole system is impaired; and thus the great centre of sensation, the brain, is imperfectly supplied with blood, its functions are irregularly excited or depressed, and those nervous disorders, hysteria and hypochondriasis, are unhappily engendered.

Some of the symptoms may be considered as follow : Too great a degree of sensibility of the nervous system, produced by constitutional defect; febrile attacks, profuse hæmorrhages, immoderate grief, excessive excretions, and obstinate constipation of the bowels, may be classed as among the causes which tend, in the highest degree, to produce this disease. The symptoms of the hysteric disease in women seem to differ only in their character of attack from the hypochondriac in men : in females the paroxysms become more violent, more frequent, and more debilitating in their result, while those of men are more permanent and more depressing to the

animal economy : on the other hand, it cannot be for a moment doubted that hypochondriac and hysteric affections often proceed from a morbid state of the alimentary canal. It would therefore appear that those diseases are produced by similar causes, in habits of peculiar morbid sensibility of the nervous system.

Hysteria has, by the ancient physicians, as well as many of the modern, been entirely ascribed to uterine disease ; but in many who have long and greatly suffered by this malady, the womb has frequently, after death, been observed to be sound. Indeed, whether these two diseases, viz., hypochondriasis and hysteria, be considered the same or distinct (for the symptoms in both so much resemble each other), it must be admitted, that as these and all great nervous disorders proceed from some glandular obstruction in the stomach, liver, or alimentary canal, the removal of such obstructions and the general management of diet, regimen, &c., must be considered as forming the important basis of all remedial measures ; and experience has proved that this uniform treatment of those

frequently twin diseases, has been eminently successful*.

We cannot be indifferent to the admirable arrangement of the various functions of the animal frame when in a healthy state, and the great wisdom displayed in the nervous system; a system which, though endued with the same general sense of feeling, yet in different organs certain sensations quite distinct from each other are evinced; for food conveyed into a hungry stomach is most gratefully received, whereas a portion introduced by accident into the wind-pipe produces violent fits of coughing until it is removed; and many instances might be adduced of substances disgusting to the palate being most agreeable and beneficial to the nerves of the stomach. I have frequently known sudden terror, excessive grief, or other violent emotions of the mind, so affect the nervous system as to occasion serious fits of hysteria, and in a more formidable degree when habits are predisposed, or where the general health had suffered from the varied forms of indigestion.

* Rowe on Nervous Diseases, p. 75.

In hysteric cases unusual sensations of heat and cold are frequently felt in various parts of the body; these may be attributed to morbid sympathy of the nervous system and of the stomach. Women, from the age of puberty, and of delicate frames, who have neglected the salutary cautions of producing regular evacuations from the bowels, who have indulged in immoderate quantities of food, and in the use of powerful stimulants, in sedentary habits of indolence and ease, and abstained from air and exercise, are those most subject to attacks of the hysteric disease*:

* “ Hic morbus, si recte calculum pono, chronicorum omnium frequentissime occurrit; et sicuti febres cum appendicibus suis duas partes tertias, ad chronicos morbos simul sumtos si comparentur, complent, ita adfectus hystericus (vel isti saltem, qui eo nomine insiguntur), ad reliquæ partis tertię dimidium adsurgunt, hoc est, chronicorum pars media sunt. Fœminarum enim paucissimæ (qui sexus adularum demidia est pars), ab omni horum adfectuum specie prorsus liberæ sunt, si istas excipias, quæ laboribus aduetæ duræ vitam tolerant. Quinimmo non pauci ex iis virus, qui vitam degentes sedentariam chartis solent impallascere, eodem morbo tentantur. Et quamlibet omnis retro antiquitas symptomata illa adfectibus hystericis adnascentia, utero semper vitio ver-

but many instances may be recounted where the most robust have been suddenly and violently affected, where the passions of the mind have been preternaturally excited, or any deviation from general health has taken place.

I have observed in some patients labouring under this disease great tenderness in the region of the stomach, acid eructations, nausea, faintness and giddiness, rumbling noises in the intestines, uneasiness, spasmodic contractions of the abdomen, palpitations of the heart, irregular menstruation, cold perspirations, frequently succeeded by hectic flushings, and the extremities cold and clammy, copious discharges of limpid urine, a sense of suffocation, and convulsive twitchings of the whole frame. I have often witnessed these symptoms assume

terit, si tamen adfectiones hypochondriacos vulgo dictas, quas splenis aut viscerum nescio quorum obstructioni imputamus, cum mulierum hystericorum symptomatis conferamus, vix ovum ovo similis, quam sunt utrobique phænomena, deprehendimus. Neque tamen reticendum est, fœminas multo crebrius hoc morbi genere corripi, quam solent mares.—*Sydenham*, p. 387.

a most formidable aspect, calculated as they are to produce serious apprehensions as to their result in the minds of those unacquainted with this disease ; for it requires the utmost attention and the most practical discernment to distinguish the true character of these affections, from what might really be symptoms occasioned by a fatal malady.

Women who are of an irritable state of constitution, of peculiar sensitive feelings, whose minds may have been tainted with morbid religious views, or any passion powerfully affecting the body, or who have indulged in the abuse of intoxicating liquors, are often attacked with many of the characteristics of the hysteric disease, although differing from the regular symptoms.

This state of *pseudo hysteria* is to be distinguished by its occurring at irregular intervals, independent of the periodical evacuation, when the patient has been exposed to cold, or when any sudden or violent emotion of the mind has occurred ; and in habits of a more robust or plethoric nature, it may be inferred that those

cases resembling hysteria are occasioned by some violent impetus of blood to the brain, producing congestion of the vessels, and therefore differing from hysteria, which may in contradistinction be termed a disorder of the nervous system. The former dependent upon the plethora of the patient, while the latter may be ascribed to a depraved state of sensibility*.

It has been remarked that when the menstrual evacuation is obstructed, the stomach, brain, and other important organs become more or less affected : this has been by many authors attributed to a plethoric state of the habit, and therefore copious bleedings have been as commonly recommended ; whereas the reverse practice should be adopted.

Although a certain increase of blood may have taken place, yet it appears that increase cannot be the *primum mobile*, but rather that an

* “ An obstruction or suppression of the menses may produce nervous or hysteric diseases, either from the sympathy of the uterus with the other parts from a redundancy of blood, or from the retention of something hurtful to the nerves.”—*Whytt on Nervous Disorders*.

important organ like the uterus is suspended in its office, and the nervous system thereby more peculiarly excited ; for all physiologists concur in the powerful dominion of that viscus over the sympathies and various classes of animal life.

Many opinions have been advanced as to the character of the menstrual secretion. Some eminent writers have presumed it to be the nutriment of *fœtal life*, from its usual suspension during a state of pregnancy : but these opinions cannot be fully maintained, or this secretion would be essential *in all animals*, whereas it is confined to the highest order ; although it may be observed in the next grade (the *ourang outang*), that slight periodical discharges have been *said* to have taken place.

Professor Liebig, in his observations on nervous and vegetative life*, remarks, “The female in the lower animals is, at certain seasons, capable of reproduction of the species. The vegetative life in her organism is rendered more intense by certain external conditions, such as temperature, food, &c. &c. ; the organism pro-

* Page 30.

duces more than is wanted, and the result is the capacity of reproduction.

“ In the human species, the female organism is independent of those external causes which increase the intensity of vegetative life. When the organism is fully developed it is at all times capable of reproduction of the species, and infinite wisdom has given to the female body the power up to a certain age of producing all parts of its organization in greater quantity than is required to supply the daily waste. This excess of production can be shown to contain all the elements of a new organism; it is constantly accumulating, and is periodically expelled from the body until it is expended in reproduction. This periodical discharge ceases when the ovum has been impregnated, and from this time every drop of the superabundant blood goes to produce an organism like that of the mother.

“ Exercise and labour cause a diminution of the menstrual discharge; and when it is suppressed in consequence of disease, the vegetative life is manifested in a morbid production of fat.”

It would appear presumptuous in me to question the accuracy or the inferences of this justly distinguished philosopher, were not the facts at variance with his statements. We see that organization is capable of reproduction in all other animals but those of the human species, without the menstrual secretion ; and, even in impregnation, it does not invariably follow that “ every drop of superabundant blood goes to produce an organism like the mother,” because foetal life is frequently observed to be maintained in all its *maturity during the whole period of pregnancy, while the periodical discharge from the uterus has been uniform in its character and quantity, and therefore not expended in reproduction.*

Again, Professor Liebig remarks, that “ exercise and labour cause a diminution in the quantity of the menstrual discharge ;” whereas we find that those females whose duties compel them to exercise and labour, and whose food is of a simple nature and sometimes of a sparing quantity, menstruate copiously and regularly, while their powers of reproducing their species

in the most perfect and healthy form are forcibly developed. Do we not often find that the menstrual secretion is not the test of excess of production, or more than is required to supply the daily waste, by its occurring in many persons whose constitutions scarcely recover its debilitating effects from one period to another? I do not allude to its abnormal state, but to what may be considered as the ordinary condition of human life.

It may be remarked, that if animal life is only to be obtained by the aid of this periodical discharge, why should it not be extended to all other animals; but it would appear as if it ranked with some of those faculties peculiar to the human species. It is evident that menstruation depends much on the habits of the woman, and the climate in which she resides: Exercise and Labour, by improving the general health, tend largely to its promotion.

If the menses alone possessed the quality of reproduction, and were the sole test of capability, as well as the main support of organization, it is evident that in proportion to its

quantity, would the size of the foetus depend ; but this is in direct variance with the facts ; for many mothers who menstruate most freely, have small children, while others in whom the discharge is limited, frequently produce the largest progeny. Within the last year a case has occurred in my own practice : the mother menstruated regularly and freely during the whole period of pregnancy, and was delivered of a healthy full-grown child, recovered from her confinement as on former occasions, when she had not this periodical discharge, and is now in good health.

In the admirable arrangement of the human body, in the infinite wisdom displayed in the creation, and the manifest desire of the great architect of the universe to elevate mankind above all other animals *, might not this monthly discharge be ordained for the purpose of controlling violent sexual passions, and by unloading the uterine vessels, allay their nervous

* Abernethy's Physiological Lectures, delivered at the Royal College of Surgeons, London, 1817.

irritability, so as to prevent that promiscuous intercourse which would prove destructive to the purest and holiest interests of civil life, demoralizing to the whole human family, and degrading to the highest attributes of our Maker?

Again, do we not witness the supremacy of sexual passions exemplified in the lower grade of animals at certain periods? They have peculiar indications of desire, which are not evidenced in the human race.

I am aware that many ingenious theories have been advanced upon this extraordinary subject; but in this wide field of inquiry, all opinions deduced from an actual recital of facts, will, I trust, be received with due consideration and indulgence, for it will be extremely gratifying to find that the future investigations of science have elucidated this important point: but I fear, until the mysteries of the nervous system are more perfectly revealed, that this secretion will alike remain in obscurity, as do many other causes and effects with which the functions of animal life are enveloped.

Müller, in his work on Physiology, observes; “ We are quite ignorant of the cause of menstruation, and its periodical return. The notion of the ancients that it cleansed the body from noxious matters is evidently erroneous; the opinion also, that its office is to relieve the uterus of the blood which, during pregnancy, would nourish the embryo, is unsatisfactory, since the small quantity of blood lost in menstruation does not correspond with the amount of nutriment which the foetus derives from the mother. More probability attaches to the view, that the human female is preserved from too great sexual excitement by the menstrual flux. But it is still more probable that menstruation is the result of a periodical regeneration,—a kind of moulting of the female generative organs; attended, perhaps, with the formation of a new epithelium. The periodicity of the phenomenon is not connected with the changes of the moon, but with some condition of the organism itself; like other periodical actions or functions, it has an internal cause. The variations of the light afforded by the moon bear no constant relation to the pe-

riods of menstruation ; on the contrary, different females are menstruating on every day of the month. The intervals of menstruation also, even when most regular, are not lunar, but solar months ; and they are very different in different women, in consequence of the various states of their system, and quite independently of external causes*."

It, however, frequently occurs, that in many instances, where the menstrual evacuation has been impeded, that discharges of blood have taken place, sometimes from the stomach, lungs, rectum, but more ordinarily from the nose ; such hæmorrhages are to be viewed as salutary reliefs to the constitution, and, if not carried to too great an extent, are to be encouraged rather than checked.

I have known females, long after that period of life when menstruation had ceased, afflicted with pains in the head, giddiness, vertigo, general lassitude and debility, with weight and sense of fulness over the forehead, dimness of

* Vol ii. p. 1482.

vision, impaired memory, and great nervous irritability, relieved immediately by sudden uterine hæmorrhages, such as, under other circumstances, would have excited great alarm by their profusion *.

My attention has often been directed to the impaired state of the female constitution, in many of those in whom what is termed "the turn of life" has taken place. The bloated countenance, the red nose, the suffused eye, the nervous and excited state of the feelings, faintings, depraved appetite, watchfulness, swollen legs, ulcerations in various parts of the body, parched mouth, constant thirst, mental aberration, difficult respiration, spasmodic contractions, violent headaches, palpitations of the heart, costive and irregular state of the bowels, flatulence with acid eructations, frequent bilious

* "It must, however, be confessed, that cases of unequal distribution of blood, whether the determination be to the head, the chest, uterus, or any other organ, are very unmanageable, and often baffle all the endeavours of the practitioner to regulate or remove them."—*Sir C. M. Clark, Bart., M.D., on the Diseases of Females*, vol. ii. p. 53.

vomitings, and discharges of blood from the rectum, with hæmorrhoids or piles; these form some of the most formidable symptoms resulting from the morbid changes effected in the systems of women whose previous habits of life, or whose previous disordered state of health, had laid the foundation of these dormant diseases. The periods when the changes of the uterine secretion occur, vary much according to climate: in the warmer it takes place early, and is discontinued equally so, and the reverse in colder countries, but it is presumed to occupy a space of thirty years in the average of female life*.

The decline of life is frequently marked by great irregularities in the discharge; often in diminished quantity, at other times, in some women who have had large families, to a great

* "The menstruous secretion begins at puberty, and generally continues till between the age of forty or fifty in this country: so that, calculating the age of puberty to be the fifteenth year, and the duration of life to be seventy years, it may be said that the menstruous secretion is performed during three-sevenths of it."—*Sir C. M. Clark, Bart., M.D.*, vol. i. p. 12.

extent, which continues many months, producing much constitutional disturbance, attended with loss of appetite, pains in the loins, faintings, œdema of the extremities, universal weakness of the system, and fits of hysteria.

Hysteria assumes various forms of *Epilepsy*: pains in the loins, affections of the chest, gravelly deposits in the urine, cramps in the stomach, locked-jaw, contractions of the muscles of the face, deafness, and imperfect vision; and we know from experience, that when the nerves are extremely delicate, a small impression on any of the organs of sense will often affect the whole system and produce the most extraordinary symptoms.

Hysteria may sometimes be the result of any acute disease from which the patient has suffered; attacks of fever, which, after their subsidence, often entail on the system such a state of nervous excitability, that the proper operations of the mind are prevented and delusions of a most extraordinary character take place: indeed, there is scarce a symptom of any disease incident to the human frame, which at

one time or another the hysteric affection does not resemble; and as the learned Sydenham elegantly remarks, "Tam diversa atque ad invicem contraria specie variantia quam nec Proteus lusit unquam nec coloratus spectatur chamæleon *."

I beg here also to allude to the many remedies proposed by others, of what are termed "forcing medicines," or rather those which are presumed to have influence upon the uterine functions. Nothing can be more dangerous or destructive to health than such a system, because, as the periodical discharge is a natural secretion and produced only by the action of healthy blood upon the uterus, it certainly is administering to an effect rather than a cause; whereas by stimulating the system, diseases of a more formidable character may be superinduced †.

* Page 132.

† "All forcing medicines should be carefully avoided, as they act by stimulating other parts, and hence their effects are often dangerous, and never certain."—*Hamilton on Female Diseases*, p. 32.

With this view, it appears evident to me that the *rationale* of treatment ought to consist in directing the utmost attention to the regulation of those secretions which constitute and maintain animal life. In order to induce any particular organ to the due performance of its office, the elements which form healthy blood must be obtained, and this can only be effected by a perfect assimilation of food by the digestive process. The suppressed secretion from the uterus is but rarely occasioned by organic disease, but may generally be traced to some morbid action in the constitution of the patient, and is in general produced by the bad state of health, rather than the *cause* of it.

It is but reasonable, therefore, to infer, that although modes of treatment must be adopted according to the habits and various forms of life, yet the governing principle must be, in the higher ranks of society, to impress upon their minds the necessity of using exercise and taking air, the regulation of the bowels, and a periodical system of diet of the most simple and nutritious character : happily those in the lower grades of

life, whose occupations compel them to habits of industry and exercise, are seldom if ever the subjects of this disease, or the train of nervous disorders resulting from it.

Dr. Paris, in his excellent work on Diet, &c. remarks, " All physicians concur in advocating the importance of regularity, both as it regards the number of meals, and the periods at which they are taken. Those who have weak stomachs will, by such a system, not only digest more food, but will be less liable to those affections which arise from its imperfect assimilation ; because, as Dr. Darwin has justly observed, they have in such a case both the stimulus of the aliment they take, and the periodical habit to assist the process*."

It has just been observed, that females in the humble classes of society are, in consequence of their habits of exercise and industry, more exempt from those nervous diseases emanating from suppressed menstruation, than others in the higher ranks of life. This must prove as a powerful evidence, that it is of the utmost

* Paris on Diet, p. 136.

importance to exert a regular and uniform influence over all the functions of life, and by deterring or moderating irregular excitements, to prevent unfavourable determinations of blood to particular parts of the body.

Dr. Combe observes, " There are 50,000 females in Great Britain who are exempted, from circumstances, from all necessary labour : " exercise, therefore, may be readily imagined to be permanently efficient in its advantages over all constitutions, by imparting that health and activity to the frame which increases the energy of the digestive organs, facilitates all the necessary secretions, and thereby invigorates every part of the frame. View the pale cheek of the poor factory girl, and compare it to the ruddy countenance of the peasant, blooming in all the luxury of health. An important consideration relates to a proper mode of exercise, and this must depend upon the habit and constitution, because the effects of active and passive exercise are essentially different in various persons ; in fact, in some it becomes irksome and even painful, while in others it affords a zest to all their

enjoyments, and furnishes the best explanation that can be offered of that remarkable energy witnessed in many delicate females under habits of regular exercise.

The advantages of travelling are obvious : many persons fancy they are never well, unless repeated changes of air and scene are followed up, and continental tours are projected, the German spas and baths are used, and the waters drank as possessing some divine agency in the removal of their diseases, and often imaginary ills. But what does all this prove? that if the same periods of time were occupied in wholesome exercise out of doors, there would be no need of quitting their native country ; for I verily believe that more benefit is derived from the examples of early rising, the stimulus to exertion resulting from a round of pleasurable and rational amusements, and the necessity induced of participating in them, than by the miraculous medical properties that have been ascribed to the various spas of the world.

It is most desirable, in the management of female education, that a different mode of train-

ing and exercise be adopted than that which is generally observed : that a greater degree of freedom in exercise should be allowed ; that the restraint and confinement so frequently and generally pursued, should be abated, if not removed : so that by thus enlarging the constitutional powers, we add most materially to the processes of life ; improve the various organs of digestion, invigorate the muscular actions of the system, and preserve its form and symmetry entire.

Need it be observed how much care is required in the early stages of female existence, so as not to bring into too violent action the muscular powers, until the frame has attained its full energies, and age has consolidated them ?

The positions of sedentary occupation, too long continued as they commonly are, not only in the seminaries of education but in domestic life, produce the most mischievous effects on the youthful female. At a period when every organ is gradually developing itself, when a most material revolution is going on, when the excitability of the sex is in the highest degree acute,

it is doubly imperative that we should endeavour to obtain an equal distribution of muscular excitement, bearing as it does a most important relation to future life, by influencing the digestive organs to a state of natural action, whereby vigour and health will be infused into the whole system.

We often observe those females whose habits or circumstances in life render it necessary to expose themselves to atmospherical vicissitudes, obtain a degree of vigour and become capable of the most powerful exertions ; thus exhibiting the relation of organization to action.

Thus, when we consider the unnatural and artificial state of our domestic institutions, and those habits of confinement which so much prevail in female life, we cannot but recommend exercise in the open air as of the utmost importance. The inhalation of more pure air than that of a dwelling is most valuable in all stages of existence, and the various climates and habits of the world furnish striking instances of the strength and stamina of women in proportion to their observance of those salutary

means. In dwelling upon the advantages of air and exercise, and the physical debility resulting from the neglect of them, I would now allude to the importance of diet in regulating the powers of the nervous system, for it must be admitted that diet has a peculiar and varied tendency, according to its character, and more particularly influences females who belong to the higher ranks of society, and partake freely of the fare which is common to them. The good effects of temperate diet accompanied by exercise, on the circulating system, must be obvious, as well as their powerful influence upon the mind in regulating those emotions which so frequently are attendant upon females in inactive life. A degree of waspishness, sullenness, and all the contortions of the female mind are witnessed, and may be frequently traced to improper food ; for we know its relative effects are not entirely confined to the digestive organs, but its power extends over the functions of the brain.

The powerful sympathy between the brain and the stomach is well known, and proves the effect that diet has over the sensations ; it

is evident that certain aliments have different influences upon the animal feelings, that the stomach often regulates the organ of thought, that a full diet will generally diminish the activity of the brain and render our ideas confused and unintelligible ; and it has been remarked that the system of diet alters the character and dispositions of people, and even of nations. But no universal plan can be adopted ; inhabitants of the northern regions requiring more food than those of the southern. The school of Pythagoras flourished in the mild climate of Greece ; and the anchorets who in the beginning of the Christian religion peopled the solitudes of Thebais, could not have endured in a severer climate the system which they observed.

In the constitutions of females there generally exists a peculiar state of excitement of the nerves, which the higher degrees of civilization powerfully develope, and the domestic habits of women tend much to produce inactivity and generate muscular prostration. It is therefore obvious how great a share diet must have in regulating

the mind, and preventing those nervous and spasmodic affections which are too frequently the attendants of female life.

“ By intemperance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
Diseases dire ; of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear, that thou may'st know
What misery the inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on man.” *Milton.*

The effect of diet is not confined merely to the organs of digestion and assimilation, but extends to the cerebral functions, and controls those impassioned emotions often destructive to domestic happiness, and too often productive of many of those diseases which undermine the constitution ; thus the physical powers of the body are reduced and calculated to excite an increased nervous sensibility, together with those wild and visionary enthusiasms of the religious devotee.

A full diet renders the intellect less susceptible, and diminishes the activity of the brain ; a fact of which we are soon made sensible by a large meal of animal food ; its excitement appears to tranquillize the nervous system, by

engaging the habit of the body and the attention of the mind to mere animal sensations.

These effects we should be most anxious to obtain in the variety of cases of great constitutional debility in females, where their sensitiveness becomes of a morbid character, and where it is connected with a tender and delicate frame.

It would, therefore, be desirable in many persons to adopt an appropriate and liberal regimen, in order to divert a finely-constituted mind from its morbid sensibilities by increasing its corporeal energies. An active circulation of blood is necessary to mental tranquillity, and the delicacy and weakness which belong to many female patients are often the *causes*, and not the *effects*.

To bring about the required balance so as to reduce the sensitiveness of the mind and increase the powers of the body, the strictest attention must be given to the nature and qualities of food which the patient partakes, and the intellectual occupations or pursuits which she follows.

We know that digestion is more effectually

performed when the mind is freed from many of the embarrassments of human life, and the body not over-fatigued or debilitated with its natural exertions. "The feast of reason and the flow of soul" are beautifully exemplified in its magic effects upon the human constitution.

The tranquillity of the intellectual faculties, the nutrition of the body, and its increased muscular powers, are only to be obtained by an effective and healthy supply of blood; an opinion which it is scarcely necessary to introduce, only as one of the observations in allusion to diet*.

* "The mixing in cheerful society, 'the flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table in a roar,' excite in the mind pleasing emotions, and contribute much to digestion by imparting increased secretion of blood, not only to the stomach, but to every other part of the body. Laughter is one of the greatest helps to digestion with which I am acquainted; and the custom prevalent among our forefathers of exciting it at table, by jesters and buffoons, was founded on true medical principles. In a word, endeavour to have cheerful and merry companions at your meals: the nourishment which one receives amidst mirth and jollity will certainly produce light and good blood."—*Rowe on Indigestion*, p. 9.

I have already remarked, that in the more refined portion of the fair sex, the nervous system is predisposed to a high state of sensibility; it therefore becomes us, instead of being captivated with the superior mental powers which so frequently are portrayed in the most delicate frames, to direct our attention to modify or restrain them,—which a regular mode of diet and regimen cannot fail to do.

We must therefore endeavour to give power to the animal frame, and so strengthen the constitution as to prevent that debility which, in early life, frequently becomes the foundation of many of the formidable diseases that afflict the female sex. The harmony of mind and body in giving activity to the various organs, and invigorating the powers of life, is an object of the highest importance, and entitled to our fullest consideration.

It is therefore manifest that there are two motives which we should steadily keep in view in any measure that we may adopt for the treatment of female diseases, for they conspire to produce the wished-for result: the first is, to

allay all mental irritability by a counteracting degree of muscular exertion ; and the second is to prevent corporeal excess by a sufficient observance of mental exercise : these regulations appropriately blended will defeat many of those diseases which bad and imperfect digestion produce, and rescue from an early grave many a delicate female whose constitution may have been affected with the primary source of debility in the lymphatic and glandular systems ; for such symptoms may be classed as the forerunners of every species of scrofula, and of ultimate pulmonary disease.

The success of these measures will mainly depend upon the firmness and perseverance adopted ; for on due reflection I think it must be admitted that they ought to form the basis of female education.

Liebig remarks, “ And when the powers of nutrition in the whole body are affected by a change of the health, then, even should the power of forming blood remain the same, the organic force by which the constituents of the blood are transformed into cellular tissue and membranes,

must necessarily be enfeebled by sickness. In the sick man, the intensity of the vital force, its power to produce metamorphoses, must be diminished as well in the stomach as in all other parts of the body. In this condition, the uniform experience of practical physicians shows that gelatinous matters in a dissolved state exercise a most decided influence on the state of the health. Given in a form adapted for assimilation, they serve to husband the vital force, just as may be done, in the case of the stomach, by due preparation of the food in general *."

The observations I have introduced on the subjects of diet and exercise, although they have extended far beyond my original intention, yet, considering their importance in the treatment of all diseases of females, and the many serious and formidable maladies their observance would avert, I have felt fully justified in dwelling upon them at this length, and endeavouring to exhibit their benefit and value in the most impressive form.

* Liebig's Animal Chemistry, p. 98.

With these views, I need scarcely add, that the principles of diet and exercise which I have alluded to, will form the principal feature of the treatment I shall venture to suggest in discussing the other objects of this work.

Another important consideration in the management of females, either in health or disease, is that of clothing; and when we view the absurd and ridiculous mode of their dress, it cannot be a matter of surprise that women become such victims to pulmonary diseases, or those affections of the chest and other vital organs, as an exposure of the skin to sudden changes of atmospheric temperature must naturally occasion.

Much depends upon the state of the external skin and its powers of re-action; for it is an unity of action which supports the due discharge of the emunctories, and enables the skin to preserve an equilibrium in the functions of respiration as well as of circulation.

On the regularity of this communication does health much depend; for we often witness that a partial current of cold air will produce sneez-

ing, and frequently inflammation of the mucous membrane which lines the passages of the wind-pipe into the chest, and occasions the irritation of a cough. This must evince the extreme sympathy, and the close connexion of the skin with the organs of respiration.

Too much importance cannot therefore be attached to the coverings of the body; the neglect of which, as can easily be proved, produces those inflammatory affections of the chest which often destroy life or engender disease, and from which, in after periods of existence, tubercular mischief is produced, and all the train of consumptive or hereditary disorders aggravated.

This opinion is fully justified by the observations of one of the most enlightened physicians of this or of any other country, Dr. Baillie; who judiciously observes, "The branches of the intercostal vessels, which are very numerous, piercing through the substance of the intercostal muscles, communicate a good deal, by anastomosis, with the external vessels on the sides of the chest: hence whatever may act on

these external vessels, so as to excite contraction in them, may be supposed capable of producing an accumulation of blood, as well as an increased action in the inner branches of the intercostals, many of which are distributed upon the pleura. Many of the inhabitants of this country, from their mode of dress, have their chests much exposed to the influence of cold and very uncertain climate; and hence the blood is frequently thrown inwards into the small vessels ramifying upon the pleura. For these reasons, probably, the pleura is more liable to inflammation than other membranes, investing cavities which have no external opening. This is so much the case, that one can hardly examine the chest of any person, who has arrived at the adult state, without perceiving more or less the traces of a present or former inflammation*.”

Much serious mischief may be traced to *thin shoes*, and frequently *wet feet*; and I believe this serves as a powerful auxiliary to the evils of imperfect clothing, in the production of those

* Baillie's Morbid Anatomy, p. 53.

fatal maladies to which I have alluded. Can anything appear more inconsistent than to witness the well-protected feet of men, as compared with the flimsy shoes of a delicate female? No one could believe, except from daily observation, that parts of the human frame which require so much care, from their importance to health, should, from the mere whim and caprice of fashion, be exposed to all the vicissitudes of climate and transition of situation, and thereby rendered liable of generating diseases destructive to life.

CHLOROSIS, or *green sickness*, will next come under consideration; and perhaps no female disease carries with it more fatal results, or is productive of more serious mischief, than this "scourge of young women." This disorder seldom occurs before the age of twelve or thirteen, and is strongly depicted in the countenance of the patient by a green and melancholy hue*; it is attended by loss of appetite,

* "Ad sunt vultus et totius corporis decoloratio, inter mescentia in facie palpebris et malleolis gravitas totius corporis,

sometimes so depraved as to covet chalk, ashes, and trash of all sorts ; difficulty of breathing, fœtor of the breath, general debility, constipation of the bowels, indolence in those who formerly had been of active and vigorous habits ; for they are with great difficulty prevailed upon to assume exercise of any kind, and what had previously imparted pleasure and hilarity now becomes irksome and disgusting ; the uterine functions have either not commenced or are suspended : these appearances form the first stage of this disease, and a continuance of them produces what may be termed the secondary symptoms, viz. pulmonary diseases, melancholy, insanity, and all the train of diseases which a depraved state of constitution may induce.

Indeed this malady when long continued opens a door for a variety of disorders ; for the stomach, craving such things as are improper and unfit for nutrition, will become loaded or oppressed, and destroy the natural sensation of hunger :

crurum ac pedum tensiva lassitudo, respiratio difficilis, cordis palpitatio, capitis dolor, pulsus febrilis, somnolentia pica, et mensium suppressio."—*Sydenham*, p. 623.

but independent of this, the swallowing such contradictory substances, will so interfere in the process of assimilation that the powers of life will become enfeebled, and all the horrors of *indigestion* promoted.

When a female has long suffered from this disease, the menstruation, which had in the early stage been defective, now becomes entirely suspended, or offensive and unhealthy in its appearance : the patient is then attacked with *æmia*, or want of blood ; the skin is flabby, the legs become puffy and swollen, respiration is hurried and difficult, violent palpitations of the heart take place, the pulse is quick and unequal, and easily excited. The evacuations from the bowels are sometimes dark, foetid, and yeasty, and the appetite which had been irregular now becomes bad ; nausea and vomiting are frequently induced, and scarcely anything can be retained in the stomach.

The continuance of these symptoms for a lengthened period need hardly be stated as productive of most fatal results : but nevertheless if proper remedies are seasonably applied,—a

strict regard to the use of as much exercise and air as the constitution is able to encounter *—the adoption of a good and regular system of diet, nutritious and consequently easy of digestion, and the removal of all obstructions of the *prima via*, &c.,—even the most aggravated case of chlorosis will be ameliorated and ultimately cured by rigid observance of these salutary measures.

Some eminent writers have attributed this chlorotic disease to defective functions in the formation of blood; but the result of my own observation is, that if we can succeed in restoring the liver and stomach to a healthy state of action, we shall remove all the symptoms of

* “Exercise, let it be remembered, must be measured in relation to the strength and habits of the individual. We have daily experience to prove that the husbandman may return to his daily labour, and the school-boy to his gambols, immediately after a frugal meal, without inconvenience or injury; but the same degree of exercise to a person of sedentary habits or of weak stamina would probably arrest and subvert the whole process of digestion.”—*Paris's Work on Diet and Regimen*, p. 122.

this disorder, and gradually invigorate the constitution of the patient.

A deficiency of blood, as well as a morbid condition of it, is induced by the deranged state of the digestive organs; the loss of appetite, the unnatural state of the stomach, and its incapability of forming chyme of a sufficient quantity, and of a quality of a healthful character*; which chyme, when united with the confluent secretions from the liver, pancreas, &c., and thereby forming what physiologists term chyle, must consequently participate in these morbid changes.

* "All the food consumed by an animal becomes in the stomach soluble, and capable of entering into the circulation. In the process by which this solution is effected, only one fluid, besides the oxygen of the air, takes a part; it is that which is secreted by the lining membrane of the stomach. The most decisive experiments of physiologists have shown that the process of chymification is independent of the vital force: that it takes place in virtue of a purely chemical action, exactly similar to those processes of decomposition or transformation which are known as putrefaction, fermentation, or decay (*eremacausis*)."—*Vide Liebig's Animal Chemistry*, p. 108.

It is but reasonable, therefore, to infer that that which is presumed to be the principal element of the blood (chyle) being unequal to the demand, the body becomes attenuated, and all the secretory organs deprived of their necessary supply.

This view of the disease must consequently appear quite at variance with the generally received opinion that chlorosis arises from want of tone of the uterine vessels, that a stimulating diet and tonic medicines are imperatively called for, and the use of aloes, steel, and powerful emmenagogues are eagerly and perseveringly to be adopted; but such a mode of treatment as this, according to my humble opinion and experience in these cases, is manifestly administering to an effect and not to the cause. "*Sublata causa tollitur effectus*," is an ancient aphorism.

When all the symptoms which characterise chlorosis are considered, the condition of the skin, the depraved state of the secretions, and the general derangement of the digestive organs, it must be admitted that debility alone could

not induce them, but rather that that prolific mine of so many maladies (*indigestion*) must be the source from whence they originate; for we see them all vanish when the functions of the stomach and liver assume their healthy and regular action.

On farther inquiry it may be asked, Do tonics or a stimulating and nutritious diet tend to produce these salutary measures? The answer is obvious; for admitting that they form powerful adjuncts in restoring the weakened powers of the constitution, yet it must be acknowledged that they are but feeble auxiliaries in correcting vitiated or morbid secretions. It may further be observed that the disease in question is peculiar to *young* women, and consequently may be presumed as not arising from a diminished state of the *vis vitæ*, but from some defective or morbid action in the constitution, which generally can be traced to the causes I have alluded to. There are some exceptions to this view of cause and effect; but I have witnessed that great and serious mischiefs have been inflicted by the

indiscriminate use of steel and other powerful tonics, in the treatment of chlorosis.

One of the most formidable evils, and one which can scarcely be dwelt upon in too strong terms, is that of compressing the chest by *tight lacing*; and although talented works have been written in which the numerous maladies arising from so mischievous and fatal a practice have been in the most powerful and convincing terms pourtrayed, yet the votaries, or rather the victims of fashion, seem to prefer disease and death, with a fine shape and figure, to the comparative comforts of freedom and ease, a natural form with a prolongation of life.

Dr. Gregory, in his comparative view of the state and faculties of man with those of the animal world, says, "We laugh at the folly and are shocked at the cruelty of these barbarians, but think it a clear case that the natural shape of woman's chest is not so elegant as we can make it by the confinement of stays. The common effect of this practice is obstructions in the lungs, from their not having sufficient room to play; which, besides tainting the breath, cuts

off numbers of young women in the very bloom of life. But nature has shown her resentment of this practice in a very shocking manner, by rendering half the women of fashion deformed in some degree or other."

The statistical returns of the Registrar-general* afford an ample proof of the prevalence of chest diseases in females, and their preponderance over the same affection in men: and to what other cause can they be ascribed than the unnatural compression of the chest? The female lungs are perfectly similar to those of the other sex in their organization and their physiology;

* "What will my fair countrywomen think, when they are informed that 39,000 females in this country have perished by consumption within the last year. I trust I may be pardoned for digressing, but here I feel bound to point out the evil consequences of compressing the chest and body to the present fashionable extent. The pressure on the chest prevents the due circulation of blood through the air-cells of the lungs; the blood is thereby deprived of its oxygen, or vital principle, and tubercles consequently form. On the liver and organs of digestion, pressure impairs their functions; the body becomes attenuated, and disease and death are the lamentable results."—*Rowe on Indigestion*, p. 61.

but when it is considered that by the tight lacing of the waist, or lower part of the chest, that the lower lobes of the lungs in its immediate cavity are so compressed and impeded in their functions that of necessity respiration must be maintained by the upper lobes, it cannot therefore be a matter of surprise that tubercular disease, and all the train of pulmonary affections, are induced in those who obstinately persist in its adoption.

No doubt, I think, can be entertained but that many diseases of the heart are primarily occasioned by this unequal and unnatural pressure of the chest: the blood is driven through the pulmonary vessels immoderately, and on any overstrained exertion the heart acts with violence, from its cavities being either too inefficiently or too copiously supplied with blood; thus the equilibrium of circulation of the heart and lungs is destroyed by the contraction of the chest.

Another powerful cause of this disease may also be assigned to the sudden atmospheric changes to which the upper part of the chest is

exposed, and to which I have alluded in my observations on Clothing.

My talented friend, Mr. Coulson, in his excellent work on Deformities of the Chest and Spine*, observes: "It is not possible to avoid, in tight lacing, pushing the ribs more to one side than another, nor the spine being curved and the patient having the high shoulder.

"If all these changes take place externally, what changes do the internal organs suffer? The under part of the lungs is compressed; the entrance of the blood is impeded; the diaphragm is forcibly pushed upwards and embarrassed in all its functions; for the bony walls of the chest, when compressed by a machine like stays, are less fitted for the necessary exhaustion and contraction, and are consequently compelled to interfere, to a certain extent, with the functions of the diaphragm.

"The viscera of the abdomen especially suffer, as they are chiefly encompassed only by soft parts: the stomach is pressed and prevented from

* Coulson on Diseases of the Chest and Spine, p. 194.

distending ; it changes its situation and form, and bad digestion ensues ; the duodenum is unnaturally pushed upwards ; the liver has its shape altered and its functions obstructed ; the rectum, uterus, and bladder are pushed downwards."

It would be occupying too much space and time to dwell longer upon the pernicious and fatal habit of tight lacing the chest, did not the subject form a most important feature in the treatment of all the diseases of females ; and I feel that I should ill discharge the task I have undertaken in representing the mode of treatment of "some of the most important diseases of women," did I not find myself supported by the best supposed authorities upon the subject with which I am acquainted.

Scemmering, in his work * "on the effect of Corsets," says that "one is astounded at the number of diseases which corsets occasion ;" and has enumerated upwards of a hundred cases to prove the correctness of his views, and which

* " Ueber die Wirkungen der Schnerrisabristie."

have all been confirmed and communicated to him by the most eminent men in the medical profession. He remarks that, "I never knew any woman who by tight lacing (that is by artificial means) had obtained a fine figure, in whom I could not, by accurate examination, point out either a high shoulder, oblique compressed ribs, a lateral incurvation of the spine in the form of an italic *s*, or some other distortion. I have had opportunities of verifying this opinion among ladies of high condition, who, as models of fine form, were brought forward for the purpose of putting me to silence." He further states that "Tight-lacing produces, in the head, head-ache, giddiness, pain in the eyes, pain and ringing in the ears, and bleeding at the nose.

"In the thorax, besides the displacement of the bones and the injury done to the breast, tight lacing produces shortness of breath, spitting of blood, consumption, derangement of the circulation, palpitations of the heart, and water in the chest.

"In the abdomen, loss of appetite, squeamish-

ness, eructations, vomiting of blood, depraved digestion, flatulence, diarrhoea, colic pains, induration of the liver, dropsy, and rupture: it is also followed by melancholy, hysteria, and many diseases peculiar to the female constitution."

After all this, can we wonder that a clever writer should say, "In times past we were ignorant enough to admire, like our neighbours, slender waists; but, thanks to our medical friends, we are cured of this folly. We were wont to think that the loves and the graces played round such delicate forms; but in future we shall never see them without thinking of twisted bones, dropsy, consumption, indurated livers, fainting, spitting of blood, melancholy, hysteria, sour tempers, difficult labours, ricketty children, pills, lotions, and doctors' bills."

Amenorrhœa, or suppressed menstruation, may be considered in two points of view; first, whether the patient has ever menstruated, or whether that secretion has been suspended: these are the generally received opinions of the character of this disease; and although in the

early stages much benefit may be rendered, yet it is often neglected from a sense of delicacy until the constitution becomes seriously affected, or some important organ participates in the general derangement.

The various periods of life at which menstruation occurs have been alluded to; and depending so much as it does upon climate and habit, it would be exceedingly improper to interfere in this process of nature until a deviation from health occurred; while in those patients in whom the secretion has been retained, remedies for the restoration of the general health should be eagerly adopted, as the cessation of so important a function (every day's experience demonstrates) will ultimately engender disease in the whole frame.

Much regard must be paid to the management of the constitution in this complaint. If the patient should be of a plethoric habit and accustomed to a sedentary life, which is so incompatible with the performance of the natural functions, bleeding will often prove beneficial, if followed up by abstinence and exer-

cise ; and although neither “emmenagogues” or “forcing medicines” are employed, yet menstruation will frequently return, as it were, spontaneously.

Whereas should the patient be of or have a weak, delicate frame, and in whom the interruption of this secretion has been occasioned by cold or general debility, a different mode of treatment must be employed ; not the hackneyed plan of a course of myrrh and steel, which would be an attempt to administer to a symptom, rather than the removal of the disease, but by directing the utmost attention to the regulation of the digestive functions, and a system of light nutritious diet, in combination with freedom of exercise, &c. : but the practitioner will always find it a matter of extreme difficulty to divest the patient or her friends of the notion that obstructed menstruation is the occasion of her disease, rather than the consequence of it.

Sir Charles Clark, in his valuable observations on the Diseases of Females, remarks, “ Every day’s experience shows, that when the secretions of those organs which are esteemed

of the greatest importance to health and life are duly performed, other secretions, which appear to be in unison with them, proceed also with the greatest regularity; and *vice versâ*." Unfortunately these salutary maxims are not attended to, or even viewed with that importance they ought to claim, and indeed demand, from those to whose care "life and health" are so frequently entrusted.

Another state of this disorder is termed *Dysmenorrhœa*, or difficult menstruation, and has been also attributed to want of tone and general spasmodic action of the uterine vessels; and most powerful chalybeates, with large doses of opium, warm bathing, and other local remedies have been suggested, and frequently with temporary relief; still this painful disease recurs in spite of all prescribed means. But I have seen many instances where, by the general arrangement of the other organs of life, where the patient has been released to a certain extent from the bonds of fashionable life, and where a mode combining some of those rules of diet and exercise which have been so much dwelt

upon in this Essay ; I have seen such cases permanently and most satisfactorily relieved from one of (what may justly be termed) the most distressing maladies that afflict the sex.

Leucorrhœa, Fluor Albus, or the Whites, may also be classed as among those important female diseases which require the utmost attention, from its debilitating effects upon the patient's constitution. It is frequently ascribed to a morbid condition of the uterus and vagina ; but this opinion is frequently erroneous, for in the majority of cases it arises from general debility of the system. The discharge assumes a variety of colours, and by its acrimony produces smarting and swelling, pains in the loins, urine scanty and turbid, loss of appetite, œdematous swellings of the legs, pallid countenance, flesh flabby and wasted, pulse frequent, hard, and wiry, foetor of the breath, the menstrual period irregular and scanty, symptoms of hysteria, great costiveness and defective state in the secretion from the bowels, sometimes relaxed, with yeasty evacuations ; depressions of spirits, great languor and debility ; the eyes appear sunken, with

a brown mark round the lids; the limbs ache, and almost every function of the human frame becomes disordered or suspended. These symptoms form the usual and prominent characteristics of this formidable disease, and when long continued terminate a miserable existence. It must be admitted that often these symptoms originate from cancer of the uterus, or diseased state of the vagina, and therefore ought always to be regarded with a suspicious eye: it therefore becomes the practitioner to act with due caution in forming his diagnosis of this disease, for they are not always the concomitant symptoms of cancer or vaginal disease. In the majority of cases that have come under my care, I have found them, as I have before observed, more dependent, and generally arising more from a vitiated state of the constitution, than any organic disease of the womb or its appendages.

Many writers on leucorrhœa have prescribed astringents, both externally and internally. To the former remedy no objection can be offered; but I conceive that a disease involving, as this

does, such fearful results and complicated symptoms, must be presumed to depend more upon constitutional causes than upon local origin, and which I believe the mere administration of astringents could not remove, unless aided by those powerful and more important agents, due attention to the organs of digestion, with those valuable adjuncts, air and exercise; and which have been so forcibly alluded to in these remarks.

Mænorrhagia, or profuse and inordinate menstruation. This may arise from a variety of causes, either from poor and inefficient food, or from a plethoric state of the habit, organic diseases of the uterus, great costiveness, violent exercise, or sudden emotions of the mind, frequent miscarriages, indulgence in intoxicating liquors, sedentary and inactive habits, and when the constitution has long suffered from the effects of *indigestion*. This disease frequently occurs at that period which is generally classed as "*the turn of life*," and often occasions the most fatal results if long continued. I have witnessed the ravages that mænorrhagia commits in many

cases; the sunken eye, the pale and emaciated state of the countenance, the general lassitude and debility, the hurried and difficult respiration, the pains in the back and loins, the varied state of the pulse, the coldness and swollen state of the extremities, the blotches and pimples of the face and skin, the loss of appetite, the giddiness, pains in the head, and noises and singing in the ears, the impaired vision, the depression of the spirits, with frequent fits of irritability, and the long train of nervous disorders. These symptoms are generally the concomitants of this frightful malady.

In persons who have passed the age of forty, menstruation will sometimes occur at periods varying from six, seven, and eight weeks, and even longer; and this deviation will continue for several years, keeping up a general derangement of the whole system, exciting latent constitutional disorders, and producing the most lamentable consequences.

It must therefore be important in such patients, where the constitution has so long been accustomed to this salutary monthly relief,

and where its suspension has occasioned some of those formidable symptoms I have described, that great attention and judgment should be exercised to relieve any important viscus that may have participated in the disorder, and to direct means to compensate for this safety valve of the habit.

When mænorrhagia occurs in females at an early age, or in those of weak and delicate frames who have had large families, a different mode of treatment must be adopted: care must be taken, instead of such depleting measures as may be deemed necessary in the former cases, that a generous diet, change of scene and air, with mild tonics, must be substituted; and it may further be observed, even in patients who suffer from cancer*, polypus, or any other *morbid* affection of the womb or other important organs, that great and important benefits may be derived, and their sufferings much mitigated, by strict attention to diet, and the general management of the stomach and bowels.

* *Vide* Case 3, extracted from the *Lancet*.

Many instances are on record where menstruation has become permanent, and the constitution of the patient consequently weaker and weaker until the powers of life have been completely destroyed, and that too at a period when the discharge ought altogether to have ceased: but here it requires the utmost discernment to distinguish the true character of the disease; for if occasioned by any organic destruction, the use of stimulants or chalybeates would be injudicious, and tend to aggravate rather than diminish the symptoms. A mild nutritious diet, with repose and anodynes, can be the only useful remedies.

HAVING now considered some of the most important diseases of women, I shall briefly allude to the general principles of their dietetic and medical treatment. I believe little doubt can be entertained that many of their disorders originate from a morbid condition of the stomach and alimentary canal, that the functions of assimilating food in the formation of healthy

blood becoming impeded or deranged, diseases of various kinds are induced. The secretions of the different organs assume an unhealthy character ; and as Dr. Prout * elegantly observes, “ thus the chemical changes of the excretions, particularly those of the urine, may be supposed to be so many indices of the assimilating derangements ; or in other words and for the sake of convenience, the chemical and mechanical deviations of the urine and other excretions from the normal state, may be supposed to constitute so many distinct diseases.”

So much has already been remarked upon diet, that it would appear superfluous to dwell at any greater length upon its advantages, not only in the removal of disease but in the maintenance of health.

Need we refer to the primitive ages, when our forefathers to habits of early rising added those of abstinence and perfect simplicity in the character of their food ? But every age has vied with each other in the complicated and various

* Prout on Stomach Diseases, &c. p. 298.

forms of pampered condiments ; and alas ! to what purpose do they tend ? The exertions of the most scientific cooks produce an unnatural desire for food, at the expense of destroying the functions of the stomach, and contributing in no slight degree to the propagation of every species of disease that can afflict the human race. Nature and art are violently opposed to each other, and great indeed is the penalty resulting from the conflict.

Mr. Abernethy eloquently observes*, “ Nature seems to have formed animals to live and enjoy health upon a scanty and precarious supply of food ; but man, in civilized society, having food always at command, and finding gratification from its taste, and a temporary hilarity and energy result from the excitement of his stomach, which he can at pleasure produce, eats and drinks an enormous deal more than is necessary for his wants or welfare.”

Many instances occur of the evils arising from overloading the stomach ; the powers of

* Page 67.

digestion are not only materially weakened and oppressed by it, but the undigested food passing through the alimentary canal, creates a degree of nervous irritability, a sensation of sinking, languor, and debility.

The most prudent and salutary measures to adopt, appear to be, to divide the time of taking food into *three regular and distinct periods*, allowing six hours to elapse between each meal; that animal food should be taken only once in twenty-four hours, and that at the *mid-day meal*; and, except in peculiar cases, that neither wine or other stimulating liquors should be drank, which excite but do not nourish the system; but occasionally beer, when mild and pure in its quality, may be substituted, and which modern chemistry has proved to contain more nutritious properties than were formerly ascribed to it: but even this mode will not adapt itself to all stomachs, for in some nervous patients I have observed that a generous diet, by exciting the stomach, will invigorate it, increase the energy of its functions, and tranquillize the disorder; but here arises the diffi-

culty. The habits of the patient ; the constitutional powers ; the various climates ; the stage and character of the disease, can best furnish the test of distinction ; and thus the man of science and discrimination alone must, or ought to be, the arbitrator.

Whilst, therefore, on the one hand, we should endeavour to proportion the quantity and character of the food, we should, on the other, endeavour to obtain that daily relief from the bowels which can tranquillize the stomach, and enable that important organ to perform its natural powers.

Bread, made with undressed flour, is an admirable form in which farinaceous matter may be taken, or even with an additional quantity of bran, as it tends to remove obstinate constipation and relieve many of the urgent symptoms of dyspepsia. Dr. Prout observes, that “ this is a remedy the efficacy of which has been long known and admitted ; yet, strange to say, the generality of mankind choose to consult their own taste rather than their reason, and by officiously separating what nature has

beneficently combined, entail upon themselves much discomfort and misery." With regard to clothing, I trust those observations which I have ventured to introduce in this work will have their due consideration, borne out as they are by practical observations, and some of the best authorities that could be offered on the subject.

As relates to tight lacing, the subject ought to have the peculiar attention of every head of a family, anxious as parents must naturally feel for the well-being and comfort of their children.

In the course of the work the advantages of air and exercise, with changes of scene, have been largely commented upon, and I trust they will have their due weight in the scale of remedial measures; they at all times form important features and powerful auxiliaries in removing mental affections, and can never be too over-rated in their influence over the diseases of women.

The symptoms and nature of those uterine disorders which have been hitherto described, and a retrospective view of their medical treatment, will next claim my attention. The gene-

rally received opinions, that the majority of these cases depend and originate from organic disease of the uterus, have led to the adoption of local remedies; and with this object the various astringent lotions, the powerful chalybeates of steel and myrrh, have been prescribed, and the utmost attention has been directed to local treatment, while the source of this malady has been overlooked.

It is therefore obvious, that such a mode as this of administering to the effect rather than the cause, will not only be proved inefficient, but tend to aggravate all the symptoms of these formidable complaints.

It is scarcely possible to witness any of these affections without perceiving many of the febrile symptoms, a vitiated state of the secretions, and a general irritability of the nervous system; and it therefore cannot be presumed, that the powerful tonics I have alluded to, will in any way prove beneficial in the removal of those morbid appearances.

Cases of sterility may generally be traced to the interrupted functions of the womb, influenced

by the deranged state of the digestive organs, and thus are frequently removed when the constitutional causes have been ameliorated; and not till such a favourable change is obtained should tonics or stimulants of any kind be added to the remedies before employed.

Sterility is seldom the result of organic defect, but may frequently be ascribed to an over-excited state of the nervous system, or some functional derangement in the secretions of the uterus. I have witnessed many instances of this nature, where *chlorosis* has long previous to marriage existed, where *dysmenorrhæa* has prevailed, where frequent and profuse hæmorrhages have occurred, and where *leucorrhæa* has any length of time attended the patient.

When we consider how rare an occurrence sterility is in the lower ranks of life, and the numerous progeny they generally have in comparison with an equal number of those in the higher grades of society, it must manifest in no slight degree how much the functions of the uterus are influenced by habits of exercise, industry, and by abstaining from those luxurious

indulgences which wealth can alone procure. It is therefore evident, that art and medical science may frequently be invoked with success, in the removal of this disorder.

Abortions, or miscarriages, may, like sterility, be generally traced to an over-excited state of the nervous system, induced by deviations from general health, obstinate constipation, a plethoric habit, tight lacing, and inattention to diet, exercise, &c. ; and require the utmost care to prevent their frequent recurrence, by directing means to improve the state of the digestive functions, and perfect repose at those periods at which it generally occurs, viz. from the third to the fifth month.

In those persons of full habit depletion will be necessary, with a spare diet and gentle laxatives, and the utmost caution should be used to avoid all agitations of the mind in every case, or any sudden effort, and particularly such objects as may tend to make an unfavourable impression upon the patient.

Those who have once miscarried are more likely to have an habitual recurrence, and

the most formidable and fatal results may be anticipated ; for the hæmorrhage will frequently continue for several days, and even weeks, until its duration has produced general lassitude and debility, with violent spasmodic affections and convulsions of the whole frame.

When such cases occur, I have seen small doses of opium, administered in the early stage, productive of great advantage. When flooding first occurs, the patient should be kept in a horizontal position. Ice may occasionally be applied to the pubic region, and the most simple and nutritious food be given, avoiding stimulants of all kinds ; and injections of gruel should be thrown up into the rectum every morning. Some writers have suggested the use of astringent injections up the vagina ; but the practice must be considered as mischievous, for the irritation much more than counterbalances any benefit that can be ascribed to the astringent properties.

Having thus far briefly alluded to the various observations made in the course of this work, I can only lament that many of these diseases

often proceed to a fatal termination; and I must add, that much depends upon the medical man, whose knowledge of disease will often determine the fate of the patient; whether a life of suffering shall be prolonged with moderated pain, whether the malady shall go on progressively in its work of destruction and unmitigated anguish, or whether the disease shall be subdued, and a valuable and important member of society be preserved to all around her: thus proving that Providence has shed its benign influence over the professors of the healing art, and enabled it to triumph over the “ills of suffering humanity.”

The remedies which my experience confirms to be most proper, will perhaps be illustrated by an enumeration of the following Cases.

CASE I.

A MARRIED Lady, residing in the country, applied to me in the spring of 1841. She had been suffering, for the last seven years, under all the formidable symptoms of hysteria and indigestion. Her spirits were so depressed that fears were entertained of her personal safety: she complained of a sinking sensation at her stomach; her vision was defective; loss of appetite; her countenance anxious and melancholic; skin hot and dry; mouth parched, and tongue coated with a white fur, particularly in the morning; general languor and debility; noises in her head, confused and painful; urine scanty and high coloured; the bowels costive, and the evacuations clay-coloured, sometimes streaked with green and slimy; discharges of mucus, and at other times knotty, resembling pebbles, with frequent tinges of blood; the uterine functions were irregular, and had been so during her illness. She was the mother of

three children ; the youngest was seven years old, from the birth of which she had dated the commencement of her attack. She had consulted several eminent and talented practitioners, she had tried various watering places, and it appeared all that human ingenuity or reason could suggest to relieve her bodily ills, or the state of her mind, had in vain been adopted.

In this state I saw her. My first plan was completely to evacuate the bowels every other day, by gentle purgatives, for a fortnight ; directing her diet to consist of light animal and farinaceous food, avoiding all stimulants, taking gentle exercise in the air. She remained in town for a fortnight ; I then recommended her return home, and placed her upon the mild alterative system I have so frequently alluded to. She persevered with great attention to all rules suggested to her, for she happily possessed a most superior mind. The symptoms varied for several months, though but gradually improved ; her spirits returned, her bowels were more regular and healthy in their appearances, the other secretions assumed a more favourable aspect, and in

less than twelve months she was perfectly restored to health. In April I was much gratified on receiving a communication from her husband, announcing her safe delivery of a girl, and her perfect recovery.

This I have considered a most instructive case, and one which must pourtray to every reflecting mind the great harmony so necessary in the various faculties of the human body, and exhibiting how peculiarly the uterine functions are regulated by due attention to the improved condition of the digestive organs. Many instances of this might be adduced in the fashionable circles of life, and many an anxious and amiable wife is disappointed in her hopes of a progeny by inattention to the important regulation of the stomach and bowels; and such cases of hysteria like this are the best evidence of the truth of this assertion.

CASE II.

MISS —, aged 30, of weak and delicate habit, consulted me ; she had been for several years suffering from many of the formidable symptoms of hysteria ; indigestion, great costiveness of the bowels, irregular uterine action. She was emaciated with pains in the chest, palpitation of the heart, difficulty of respiration, violent head-aches, nausea ; her countenance was pallid, her lips blue, her skin was dry and rough, with blotches and pimples on her face ; catamenial periods irregular and scanty. She had suffered much from hæmorrhoids, and frequently had copious discharges of blood from the rectum. Her strength appeared to be gradually declining, and her situation had of necessity excited the greatest alarm in the minds of her family connexions ; for, notwithstanding many approved remedies, the disease overpowered all efforts for relief. She was suddenly seized with a violent fit of coughing and hæmoptysis, which

threatened a speedy termination to her sufferings. In this state the usual plan was adopted, and the imminent danger averted; but she was reduced, much weakened, and, consequently, more influenced by her former maladies. At this period I visited her, and by directing the utmost attention to the regulation of air and exercise, counter irritation to the chest, simple laxatives, with a bland nutritious diet, the consumptive symptoms gradually disappeared; and after a few months her system became so much invigorated, that I ventured to adopt a mild alterative course of treatment, and recommended change of air and scene. The dyspeptic symptoms gradually improved, the menstrual secretion returned periodically in a healthier and a more copious condition; and it was a matter of great satisfaction to ascertain that as the digestive organs resumed their healthy condition, that the uterine functions became proportionably restored. She has now continued well for the last three years.

CASE III.

To the Editor of the Lancet.

Sir,

THAT one fact is worth a thousand theories, was never more fully manifested than in the following case, which I venture to submit for insertion in your valuable and important journal.

In February last, I was requested to see an unmarried Lady, aged 43, residing at Lambourn, in the county of Essex. She complained of pains in her stomach and side, general lassitude and debility, loss of appetite, restless nights, frightful dreams, parched mouth and constant thirst, sinking sensation at the stomach, her bowels generally irregular, sometimes constipated, at others relaxed, with yeasty evacuations and defective of bile; the urine muddy, dark coloured, and depositing a brownish sediment; skin dry and horny; the uterine functions had been irregular and unhealthy for the last two years, frequent discharges of blood from the rectum, great tenderness, and hæmorrhoids. She was

nervous and dejected, the pulse weak and feeble. Reviewing, as I did, all these symptoms with interest and attention, I could not conclude but that this was a case of dyspepsia in its aggravated form and character, and directed my remedies in the most careful manner, commencing with the fullest depletion of the stomach and bowels. I afterwards ascertained that she had been suffering from pains in the right arm-pit and breast; and, on examination, was shocked to find a considerable glandular swelling in the axilla, and a large tumour in the breast of a most decided *cancerous* character; ulceration had commenced round the nipple, and although she had perceived the induration gradually enlarging for two years previous, yet had never disclosed this to her family. The communication, as may be imagined, was most painful. Happily operations are not now deemed advisable; for I believe that any increased excitement would only have superinduced increased morbid action, for its malignant character could not be mistaken. However, I persevered in the plan I first suggested, which was

to regulate the functions of the digestive organs by a mild alterative mode of treatment, with strict attention to a light nutritious diet, consisting of animal and farinaceous food. The disease continued increasing, ulceration and sloughing were most extensive, including the nipple; and the centre of the breast became so hollow, that the thumb might have been passed into the cavity; the surface of the wound was more unequal, and the edges were more hard, rugged, and painful, with a profuse discharge of a thin ichor, and of so foetid a character that every means were adopted to counteract it; the axillary glands became more enlarged and painful. She remained in this deplorable condition till the beginning of May, persevering most rigidly in the plan of treatment prescribed, when, with a view of counteracting in an increased degree the rapid disorganization that manifested itself, and also of rendering her existence more tolerable, I directed a solution of chloride of lime to be immediately applied to the breast, and to be constantly repeated, together with warm bread-and-water poultices. The

destruction of parts appeared checked ; the discharge and foetor became much diminished. Healthy granulations gradually arose, and as her general health became more and more improved, which every week effected, the wound continued to heal, and the pains and glandular swellings departed ; and at this time my patient is capable of taking exercise to an extent that previousl fatigued her. Her dyspeptic symptoms have vanished ; and it is fair, I think, to infer that, with attention to the management of her digestive functions, that though *carcinoma* may not be exterminated from the system, yet that life may be prolonged, with all its enjoyments and comforts, and a formidable disease, distressing and painful in all its characteristics, be brought under the power and control of the medical art. This case also serves as a striking illustration of the potent effects of indigestion ; for truly did the local disease become an index of the improved state of the digestive organs.

I am, Sir, your faithful Servant,

12 Aug. 1843.

Geo. Rob. Rowe, M.D.

(*Vide Lancet*, p. 687.)

CASE IV.

A MARRIED Lady, in the spring of 1840, residing some distance from London, requested me to visit her; she was 44 years of age, and had for three years previous been suffering from constant and profuse *uterine hæmorrhage*; she was the mother of a large family, and had experienced great irregularity in menstruation since the birth of the youngest child; she was now so reduced as to be compelled to keep her bed, and appeared to be rapidly sinking; her pulse was weak and irritable, constant pains in the head, and tension about the eyes; her sleep was disturbed with frightful dreams, and she suddenly used to awake with terror; the skin was hot, dry, and flabby; the tongue loaded with a white tenacious fur; mouth parched, and almost constant thirst; depression of spirits, with hysterical fits of crying and laughter; the bowels were costive, and never evacuated but from aperient medicine; her appetite was depraved, with nausea of the stomach, although she vomited but seldom; the

least contradiction threw her into a fit of melancholy, and her condition almost amounted to a state of insanity, for the whims and caprices of her mind were continually at variance with each other; flushings in her face; cold and hot fits by turns; copious and frequent discharges of pale urine; at other times the secretion appeared to be scarce and high-coloured, with a brickdust sediment.

In this condition I saw her, and prescribed mild and gentle purgatives for a short time, with a simple diet of farinaceous food, avoiding stimulants of all kinds, and giving positive injunction that everything likely to tranquillize her mind should be adopted; that the bed-chamber should be frequently aired, and an even temperature be preserved; that the opium which she had had recourse and been recommended to, should be gradually diminished in its quantity. In three or four weeks she found herself somewhat better, but the formidable symptoms still retained their character. The secretion from the bowels continued offensive and ill conditioned. I now directed my atten-

tion principally to their improvement, by a mild alterative system of treatment, and cold-water injections up the rectum, occasional purgatives, and interspersing my plan with alternate meals of plain animal food. Her digestion appeared gradually to improve, some of the symptoms seemed to yield, and after great perseverance she was enabled to quit her chamber; and it was a most powerful illustration of the great connexion and sympathy of the various organs of life, to perceive that in proportion as the *alvine secretions* improved in their appearance, so did the general health participate in their progress. The profuse hæmorrhage gradually subsided, her nights became more tranquil, her stomach more capable of taking food; and being now enabled to change the scene, by taking air and exercise she in a few months was perfectly restored to health. In this case *no tonics* of any kind were employed; thus proving, to a certain extent, that the most effectual mode to strengthen the stomach and bowels is to improve those secretions that are continually emptying themselves into them, and thereby

allay their morbid sensibility. The reputation that bitters have had in the restoration of the animal powers appears to me ungrounded, unless they may be viewed as the mere adjuncts, after the more important objects are accomplished by the removal of biliary and other obstructions in the *prima via*.

CASE V.

A LADY, residing in the country, consulted me in 1841. She had been the subject of disease for many years, and was the mother of several children. She was about 50 years old ; and, since what is generally termed “the change of life,” and long previous to it, had been suffering by occasional profuse hæmorrhages from the uterus ; this had so much reduced her, that she had contracted the most baneful habits of intemperance, and was with difficulty controlled from their indulgence. She was attacked with all the various forms of hysteria, and was subject to paroxysms of melancholy or low spirits, which

occurred at intervals of a month or five weeks and lasted for a fortnight, and frequently a longer period. Her appetite was irregular ; sometimes ravenous for food, at others with difficulty prevailed upon to take any. Her bowels were generally costive, with cholicky pains and rumbling noises ; the urine scanty and high coloured ; pulse hard, wiry, and frequent. She was much emaciated, and presented an object of great commiseration. She complained of pains in her back and loins, sourness and wind in her stomach, palpitations in the heart, and occasional fits of asthma, with a sensation as if a lump or ball were in the throat ; faintings, and slight convulsive twitchings of the whole frame. Her nights were sleepless, with a feeling as of falling from a precipice. She was weary on the slightest exertion ; and, from having been of most active and vigorous habits, was now with difficulty prevailed upon to enter into any amusement or any pursuit that formerly imparted gratification to her. I commenced the plan of treatment I have dwelt so much upon in this work, viz. directing my principal attention to the correction and

improvement of the digestive organs, and I found a corresponding amendment in all her symptoms ; and although she may be considered as not robust or healthy, yet her life has been happily preserved, and, by the removal of those distressing maladies, rendered free from suffering, and a comfort to her anxious family.

CASE VI.

IN 1841, I was consulted by a young Lady, aged 16, who had been for three years subject to cramps and pains in the stomach, want of appetite, general lassitude and debility, frequent vomitings of blood of a dark colour ; her legs were œdematous, and her skin yellow and flabby ; her bowels costive, in fact only relieved by medicine ; she had never menstruated. The spinal column appeared unable to sustain its weight, and one shoulder to project. She was hysterical in the highest degree ; the extremes of passion could not be more powerfully illus-

trated. Her respiration was hurried ; pulse frequent, quick, and hard ; her eyes were sunken and yellow tinged ; a more complete case of *chlorosis* could scarcely be seen. The whole routine of emmenagogues or forcing medicines had been employed ; warm baths, change of scene, and all the approved remedies had been had recourse to. Her condition gradually became worse, and she could with difficulty take even a short walk ; exercise or exertion of any kind seemed to distress her ; she was restless and impatient. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that such a deplorable state could not be viewed but with considerable anxiety and alarm, and in this condition I saw her. I endeavoured to ascertain whether any vital organ had become seriously involved in the prevailing mischief to the constitution, but could not with certainty satisfy myself on this point ; however, I directed my measures to allay the general disturbance by mild purgatives and the adoption of a milk diet with farinaceous food, and also that every effort should be used to calm her mind and inspire her with confidence, and

that a change of scene should take place. I also detected that she had constantly kept herself *tight laced*, and on close examination discovered considerable irregularity in the developement of the chest and spine ; which pernicious custom I immediately took means to avert. The mild purgative plan was continued for a month, and the evacuations remained yeasty, defective in bile, sometimes streaked with green slimy mucus, at others with blood and portions of skin.

Her countenance was now most anxious ; she was more irritable, and her nights restless. Sleep seemed almost to have forsaken her ; I therefore prescribed doses of opium, with much good effect ; still persevering in the dietetic treatment and occasional purgatives, with a mild alterative course of medicines. A few months rolled on, and it was a source of much gratification to find that our efforts were successful ; and although neither steel or tonics of any kind were employed, yet as her general health became amended the menstrual secretion appeared, and her periods became perfectly

regular. I had no doubt in my own mind that this disease had been primarily induced by tight-lacing, for she had, up to the period of attack, been a most healthy child ; and it proved an instructive lesson, that as the organs of respiration became unembarrassed the functions of the liver assumed a healthy character. The depletion of the prima via of all its crudities, with moderated exercise, the mild alterative treatment, and a strict attention to dietetic rules, produced the consummation of all our wishes.

CASE VII.

THE Wife of an eminent Artist in this country applied to me in the month of June last year : she was 42 years of age, and the mother of several children, the youngest of whom was three years old, since which she had dated all her maladies. She complained of great debility, that her legs ached, and that she was incapable of exertion,

although having been all her life of most active habits ; her appetite was defective ; she was melancholy and gloomy in her ideas, and appeared indifferent to the concerns of the world : she had pains in the head and neck, giddiness and constant noises in her ears ; her vision was defective, her bowels irregular, sometimes constipated, with knotty substances, and at others relaxed, with copious yeasty motions tinged with blood ; white discharges from the vagina : and it was impossible to have witnessed those symptoms without classing her disease as a case of *leucorrhœa*, although not in the most aggravated character. She had been frightened into the idea that her symptoms denoted cancer of the womb, and seemed to be quite abandoned to her fate, for it required some energy to dispel the gloom that hung over her mind, as, in addition to the vaginal discharge, she had a green-coloured secretion from the uterus, and her menstruation had been irregular in its periods, scanty, and foetid. She had been recommended to adopt a more generous diet, and to try the sea air ; but her stomach loathed the food, and

she soon returned home dispirited : other means had also been suggested, but with no practical benefit.

I advised a complete alteration in her diet, abstinence, gradually, from wine and other stimulants ; the bowels to be acted upon freely twice in a week ; cold ablutions, and an alterative system of treatment of mild and undebilitating doses of pil. hydrarg., with warm aromatic purgatives. The change appeared to have a magic effect ; in a few weeks she was more tranquil, thought more favourably of herself ; and by perseverance and watching over the symptoms, for they varied at all times, I was much gratified to find the disorder ultimately yield, and in a few months she was restored to her former health : thus proving another striking instance of the necessity, in medical practitioners, of carefully weighing every symptom of disease before a correct prognosis can be formed, inasmuch that it may affect their own judgment as well as prove destructive to the feelings and happiness of the patient.

CASE VIII.

A YOUNG Lady had been for the last three years suffering from constant head-aches ; she had tried leeches, the application of ice, had travelled for several months, used the various German baths ; but she returned dispirited, her appetite defective, the legs were swollen, her face was full of blotches and pimples, her menstruation irregular and defective ; she was feverish, restless, violent tremors and palpitations of the heart, languid and debilitated, with frequent long and continued fits of hysteria. The disease had been presumed to depend upon the morbid state of the uterine functions, and therefore the various approved emmenagogues, steel, myrrh, &c. were employed ; but the symptoms increased, and appeared to resist all the remedies that had hitherto been devised. In this condition I was requested to see her ; and supposing that many of these symptoms might have been induced by mental disquiet-

tude, I was at once assured by her family that my suspicions were groundless, and that up to the period of her attack she had been of a most healthy constitution, her spirits had been good, and she was of active habits. I ascertained that her bowels had been most obstinate, and had not been relieved since her illness but by artificial means. I now directed my attention to their perfect evacuation, and to the adoption of a simple diet of animal and farinaceous food, avoiding all vegetables, substituting boiled rice. For some time the symptoms did not appear to be relieved in the slightest degree ; she seemed hopeless, and it required some considerable effort to rouse her from the gloomy forebodings of her mind. Still the plan was prosecuted strictly, but with comparative little success, when my attention was peculiarly directed to the increased pains in her chest and loins, and on examination I discovered the distorted state of the spine and the elevation of one shoulder. Conviction flashed across my mind that this was another case of the lamentable consequences of compression of the chest by tight

lacing ; I therefore directed her dress to be as loose as convenient, and persisted in the mild course of alterative medicines, with those plans of diet, exercise, and regimen I have so much dwelt upon in this work, and happily no case could have proceeded with more satisfactory results. The freedom of respiration was soon manifested. The bowels continued inactive for many months ; and though the catamenia were for some time irregular and defective, yet, in common with the other symptoms of this distressing case, they finally yielded.

CASE IX.

A LADY, aged 40, after having been subject for some years to all the train of nervous disorders, became so enfeebled that I was requested to see her in the autumn of 1842. She was unmarried, and had menstruated from the age of 16, sometimes irregularly, at others defective in character and quality ; her bowels were usually

constipated, her urine was dark with a brown sediment, at other times limpid, copious, and pale; she was much emaciated, and was only capable of taking exercise in her carriage. I found considerable enlargement of the liver, with difficult breathing, as if effusion had taken place in the chest; her skin from her earliest remembrance had been dry and scurfy, and the pores were morbidly closed, for she never perspired; her eyes were sunk and tinged with yellow, her mouth was parched, the tongue dry and thickly coated; she complained of pains in the back and weakness of the loins, and had been on several occasions suspected of spinal disease, although there was no distortion or other indication; she was subject to violent attacks of hysteria, and although a person of most superior mental attainments, all her powers of reasoning and determination could not withstand or repel their paroxysms. I confess it appeared to me a forlorn case; for although it could scarcely be imagined that a disease which had so long been accumulating, and had resisted the most scientific remedies, was to be removed, yet it appeared

there might be a chance of rendering the patient's existence more endurable by mitigating some of those urgent symptoms which presented themselves : I therefore directed mild purgatives to be taken twice a week for the first month, with small doses of mercury ; cold injections of water to be thrown into the rectum every morning. This plan relieved the patient much, and I now therefore ventured upon mercurial frictions on the region of the liver, with the course of alteratives, paying the utmost attention to diet, and urging as much exercise in the open air as could be borne without fatigue or pain. Under this course of management, I will not state that my patient perfectly recovered ; but I feel justified in asserting that in the course of a few months she was enabled to take a longer walk than she had done for ten years, and all her symptoms gradually improved.

CASE X.

A YOUNG married Lady, in the spring of 1842, consulted me: she appeared much debilitated, complained of pains in her back, loss of appetite, sense of suffocation, and hurried respiration, pulse frequent and hard. She informed me that she had been married five years; that after the first year she had been confined at the usual time with a healthy child, and since that period had miscarried three times between the third and fifth months. Her menstruation had been profuse and irregular; and although she had, under the judicious advice of her medical attendant, kept in a recumbent position, and had used all precautionary measures customary on such occasions, yet she had failed, was disappointed, and dejected. Steel, bark, myrrh, and various tonics had been prescribed, but at the termination of the third month of pregnancy a slight discharge generally occurred, and, notwithstanding all the care and caution,

continued till the abortion actually took place. These unnatural and debilitating results had so much reduced her constitutional powers, that the natural secretions appeared all impaired. Her digestion was imperfect, her stomach sometimes irritable ; her bowels were costive, knotty, and deficient of bile, attended sometimes with discharges of slimy mucus tinged with blood ; indeed a more perfect case of indigestion could scarcely be depicted. She was hysterical, with frequent faintings and convulsions, and her vital energies seemed fast waning ; and as her case resembled most of the characteristics of indigestion, she was desirous of submitting herself to my care.

The prostration of strength and the general emaciation of the frame, demanded more than ordinary caution in the application of remedies : I therefore ventured to prescribe the most gentle laxatives, a milk and farinaceous diet, all freedom from excitement ; the mind to be employed ; taking air and exercise with the least possible exertion, so as to avoid the slightest chance of fatigue. Nature seemed to rally ;

the removal of all accumulation in the bowels produced a salutary effect. Her appetite gradually returned ; undebilitating doses of mercury were employed, with other mild remedial measures ; her menstruation resumed its usual periods in improved character ; and change of scenery and air, with constant attention to the state of the bowels, varying the alteratives as certain indications occurred, finally consummated our best wishes by her restoration to health. She has since, by the precautions suggested to her for the management of her health, quite recovered her former strength and spirits, and has since gone the regular period of pregnancy.

No doubt could be entertained but that the repeated miscarriages were primarily induced by the deranged state of the digestive functions ; and that in proportion as they resumed their powers, so were the other organs of life, and even of procreation, again rendered competent to perform their natural office.

CASE XI.

IN the beginning of the year 1842 I was consulted by a married Lady, 50 years of age : she had been the mother of a numerous family, and for the last five years, since menstruation had ceased, and what was termed “the change of life” had taken place, had been subject to violent head-aches, pains in the back and loins, obstinate costiveness, great depression of spirits, hysterical fits of laughter and crying, frequent bleedings at the nose, and copious vomitings of dark-coloured blood. Her countenance was livid, her nose pimpled and red ; she had several glandular tumours in the neck ; her appetite was defective, at other times she was ravenous. Although previously a most active woman, she was now sluggish and indolent ; all exertion fatigued and annoyed her. Her nights were sleepless, her legs were swollen ; and as a climax to her sufferings, she had a large ulcer near the right ankle, deep seated and discharging

a thin bloody sanies, and so acrid in its nature as to produce excoriation near it. Her skin was dry and horny, her pulse quick, and respiration hurried, her tongue loaded, and the mouth parched with constant thirst; and I might add with safety, that a more formidable phalanx of the ills of human nature could scarcely be witnessed. I at first imagined that these were the symptoms induced and aggravated by intemperance; but my suspicions were soon removed, for her character through life had been distinguished for remarkable abstinence and amiability of disposition; and even under the crying necessity which the great debility and sensation of sinking at her stomach had excited for the use of stimulants, yet she could only with difficulty be prevailed upon to take wine or any other fermented liquor. Her diet, I ascertained, had been too luxurious; she had taken animal food of all kinds and at almost every meal, under the direction of an eminent medical practitioner, and at first, as she considered, with much benefit; but the disease seemed to overpower all the usual remedies, and almost in a forlorn mood she

applied to me. My first plan was to deplete the bowels on alternate days for a week or two, directing a mild and simple diet of farinaceous food with small proportions of animal, avoiding stimulants of all kinds, and also that the ulcer in the leg should be washed thoroughly clean with warm water three times a day, afterwards applying cataplasms of bread and water, with a small piece of dry lint next to the wound.

I particularly enjoined that the patient's mind should be kept free from all excitement, that every indulgence should be afforded her, that little rational amusements should be resorted to, in order to divert the mind from constantly contemplating on the serious state of her sufferings, and that change of scene and air, when practicable, should be adopted.

I also directed that injections of warm water should be thrown up the rectum every morning, thus ensuring the perfect evacuation of the bowels once in 24 hours; and by adopting a mild course of alterative medicines, with occasional purgatives, the symptoms gradually yielded. The efforts of nature, in removing many

of the formidable disorders the patient suffered from, were strikingly manifested; she recovered perfectly. This case proved in the most convincing manner, that the *best tonics* to a weak and emaciated frame, are those which, by cleansing the *prima via*, give freedom to the organs of digestion, and enable the natural powers of the constitution to rally from the attacks of disease.

CASE XII.

A YOUNG Lady, in the autumn of 1842, applied to me: she had been suffering from severe head-aches for several years; her memory had become impaired, her vision defective, her nights were sleepless, her legs were œdematous, her face was disfigured with blotches and large boils, her eyes were glassy and pupils dilated, and skin hot and dry, with constant thirst; the

tongue was white and thickly coated, foetor of the breath, her appetite defective and depraved, pulse quick and wiry ; she was much emaciated, with violent and frequent attacks of hysteria ; the catamenia were irregular and scanty ; her bowels were constipated, with rumbling and croaking noises in them ; the least incident alarmed her, for she was easily excited ; she had frequently vomited thick grumous blood, which was always accompanied with a sense of fullness and pain in the epigastric region : she had been of most studious habits, and this having been carried to an extreme, had, no doubt, laid the foundation of her disorders. The case was truly pitiable ; every remedy of acknowledged merit had been tried, and even empirical means had been resorted to, but the disease appeared to bid defiance to all efforts ; she was forlorn, dejected, and hopeless ; and mere chance induced her to consult me. Reviewing, as I did, all those symptoms with care and attention, I concluded this was a case of *dyspepsia*, of an aggravated form and character ; and I therefore directed my remedies in the

most careful manner, beginning with the fullest depletion of the bowels and stomach, adopting under varied circumstances that mild alterative treatment I have frequently alluded to, with animal and farinaceous diet, warm baths for the first three or four weeks, and a system of taking exercise and air daily. In a few weeks she appeared better, her appetite was improving, her bowels were more regular and the colour much altered, the liver gradually resuming its functions, her spirits became better, and her ability of exertion became evidently increased. I now prescribed the use of the cold shower-bath every morning, in conjunction with my other measures; and my patient is at this time, I believe, in perfect health.

This case presents an interesting history to all medical practitioners, whether viewed physiologically or pathologically. The morbid sympathy induced by the deranged functions of the liver and stomach upon the brain, was never more powerfully developed; her vision improved, and her head-aches ceased, in correspondence with the improved condition of her general health.

It is probable that there had been pressure from serous effusion on the brain ; and as the amended state of the digestive functions rendered the absorbent system more effective, it also explained the medium of her recovery.

1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

2. The second part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.



